

Scholes slams his 150th MU goal

Former England midfielder Paul Scholes scored his 150th goal for Manchester United at Craven Cottage on Sunday in their Premier League match with Fulham. The 35-year-old, who made his debut for United in 1994, struck in the 11th minute to put United 1-0 up. Paul Scholes plans to remain on the books at Manchester United for as long as the club feel he can do a job. The veteran midfielder has enjoyed a blistering start to the new campaign, turning back the clock with some awe-inspiring displays.

- AGENCIES



Manik back for Black & Whites

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Shafiqul Islam Manik returned to his old hunting ground after a gap of three years as the AFC-A license coach was appointed yesterday as the head coach of Mohammedan Sporting Club for the next two years.

Manik, who was nominated by the football committee on Thursday, was finally approved by the ad-hoc committee convened by Kutubuddin Ahmed.

"We appointed one of the best coaches in the country and I believe Mohammedan's success in the coming season will come through him," said Kutubuddin yesterday at the club premises in Motijheel.

There was a whisper that Manik or Shahidur Rahman Shantoo was going to take charge of the Black and Whites although member secretary Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan, who was not present yesterday, had pointedly given his blessings to the latter.

The appointment of Manik, however, has become possible because of a new look ad-hoc committee that first also brought changes in the football committee with the inclusion of its former booters Sabbir, Johnny and Ilias.

"Mohammedan has been going through a transition period and we just followed the recommendation of the football committee," Kutubuddin said. "We will lay the emphasis on

the young players and try to rope in quality foreign players as well as a foreign trainer."

Manik first acted as an assistant coach of Mohammedan in 1996 before taking charge in the last quarter of 2005 to help the Black and Whites clinch the title of the National Football Championship.

The former Mohammedan player guided the popular Black and White outfit to finish behind champions Abahani in the first professional football league.

Manik was once hugely successful with Muktiyoddha Sangsad as he guided them to a Premier League, two Federation Cup wins, a national football league, an Independent cup and a McDowell Cup victory in India.

"We have lost almost 95 percent players from the last season and this time we confirmed so far 14 players, who are less known to us as well as you. But, it is a game of 90 minutes and no one can predict the result when those players wearing the jersey of Mohammedan take on the opponents," said Manik, who believed their strength would be increased once five foreign players from Iran, Kenya, Rwanda or Russia join the Black and Whites.

Mohammedan retained the services of defender Hasan Al Mamun and Enamul Haq Sharif and confirmed players like goalkeepers Titumir, Sultan, defenders Arifat Rony, Saidul Haq, Ripon Khan, Rasel Ansari, midfielders Rajan Ali, Sagor, Rony Islam, and strikers Sariful Islam and Anwar Hossain.

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Mohammedan's ad-hoc committee presents Shafiqul Islam Manik (C) as the club's new coach during a press conference at the club premises yesterday.

Sraboni, Shahnaz leave for Korea

SPORTS REPORTER

Sraboni Biswas and Shahnaz Parvin were scheduled to leave here in the early hours of Tuesday for the Republic of Korea to take part in the sixth Korean Open International Taekwondo Championship and also to receive higher training from a Korean University.

The pair from Ansar has been selected ahead of South Asian gold medalists Sharmin Farzana Rumi and Shammi Akhter raising many eyebrows over the transparency of the selection process.

"Rumi pulled out of the championship due to illness while Shammi has been suffering from fever. Barring them, the two we have chosen are the best available players from the Asian Games' camp. Sraboni won a bronze medal and Shahnaz finished fourth in the SA Games," defended Saydur Rahman Swapon, joint secretary of the executive committee, the tenure of which expired on February.

Swapon said that they have high ambitions with Rumi and Shammi for the upcoming Asian Games which is why they did not take any risk by choosing them for the Korean Open, a tournament where Mizanur Rahman and Raisul Islam won gold medal before the 2010 SA Games at home.

Meanwhile, when contacted Rumi declined to comment on the issue and told that she was busy, and has not

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Acid test's name is Ashes

AFP, Sydney

England batting hot-shot Eoin Morgan is untested against Australia and will find this year's Ashes Test series "a massive step up" from one-day cricket, Australian skipper Ricky Ponting said Monday.

Ponting had Morgan in his sights as he spoke with reporters at the team camp on Queensland's Sunshine Coast ahead of October's tour to India. After being named man of the recent one-day series against Australia, Morgan is averaging almost 37 from five Tests.

But Ponting warned: "It [Test cricket] is a lot different [to one-dayers]."

"I think one of the reasons for playing him is his attitude and the way he goes about it -- but he hasn't been tested against us yet. "Although he has played a couple of Tests, it will be a massive step up for him going into an Ashes series."

Last month Morgan became the first Irish-born batsman to score a Test hundred for England in over a century with his 130 against Pakistan at Trent Bridge.

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Bangladesh cricket captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (R) tries something new with ropes while teammate Mahbul Alam (C) and trainer Grant Trafford Luden look on during a training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

FAULTY BUILDING BCB will probe

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will investigate the complaints about the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy building.

Within seven months of its functioning, the three-storied dormitory that houses the best cricketers of the country has developed cracks. Besides, water is leaking from walls, plasters got damp, which surprised many.

"The board has taken the matter very seriously. Gazi Ashraf Hossain [BCB's director] has been given the responsibility to sort out the problems after talking with all authorities concerned," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday.

It was learnt that the BCB had already given a letter to the people concerned in June apprising them of all these problems, but the issue has yet to be solved.

"The board will not tolerate any negligence regarding this issue. We must solve this problem immediately," Jalal added.

BCB has been mainly using this elegant-looking building for the last seven months as residence for the players and coaches. And everybody staying there has been complaining of the poor construction of the building, and even worse maintenance.

Kiwis not touring Pakistan

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand cricket chiefs on Monday backed the idea of fundraising matches for flood-ravaged Pakistan but ruled out the prospect of the Black Caps travelling there.

Reports from Pakistan indicated New Zealand had offered to play there to raise funds for flood victims, but New Zealand Cricket chief executive Justin Vaughan said his message to the Pakistan Cricket Board had been misconstrued.

"At no point did we offer that the Black Caps would be touring as they certainly won't be playing there this year," Vaughan said.

"But it would be nice to think that in a cricket-loving country such as Pakistan that cricket could play a part in alleviating some of the suffering that is going on there."

International cricket came

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BCB approves two foreigners rule

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has approved the participation of two foreign players in a match for the upcoming Premier Division Cricket League.

The board of directors took the decision in a meeting on Sunday where they decided to allow registration of a maximum of five foreign cricketers.

The foreign players must also be at least current first class cricketers and should obtain NOC from their respective boards or associations for playing in Bangladesh.

Earlier, the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM), which runs the show of the country's most coveted domestic competition, had agreed in principle to accept the demands of the club.

Meanwhile, the board also decided to appoint Tanjeeb Ahsan as national team operations manager until the end of ICC CWC 2011

and also approved the appointment of Julien Fountain as Bangladesh's fielding coach.

The BCB has nominated Nadir Shah and Enamul Hoque as field umpires and Sharfudoula Ibn Shahid as TV umpire in the ICC Panel.

BCB director and former national skipper Gazi Ashraf Hossain will be the organizing secretary for New Zealand's tour to Bangladesh in September-October. New Zealand is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on September 29 to play five one-day internationals although the BCB is yet to release the itinerary of the series.

It was also decided that Bangladesh opening batsman Tamim Iqbal would be sent to Australia for treatment of his injured hand.

The dashing left-hander had been experiencing lingering pain in an old injury which he incurred during an ODI in Chittagong against India on November 5 last year.

Also, as per decision the BCB AGM will be held on October 24 this year.

The BCB budget for 2010-11 amounting Tk 120,59,26,925.00 was also approved.

Greg to make big calls

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Battling great Greg Chappell, appointed Australia's first full-time selector Monday, said there was no rush "to push anyone out of the door" with several stars in the twilight of their careers.

Cricket Australia (CA) announced that Chappell, 62, would leave his current position as head coach of the national centre of excellence to take up the official role of national talent manager within the next month.

Andrew Hilditch will continue to chair the national selection panel and Chappell will join as one of its four members.

Chappell's appointment comes at a time of change in Australian cricket, left in a state of flux after the recent retirements of Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath, Adam Gilchrist, Matthew Hayden and Justin Langer. Former Test captain Chappell said he was

ready to make big calls in the rebuilding of the Australian Test side.

"It comes with the territory," said Chappell, who ended Sourav Ganguly's captaincy during his tenure as Indian coach.

With skipper Ricky Ponting, Michael Hussey and Simon Katich all aged 35, Chappell may have to make the big calls sooner rather than later.

But he said: "You have to earn the right to play for Australia, that's something the whole selection panel is conscious of, and will bear in mind going forward."

"There's no rush to push anyone out of the door."

Chappell's new position means either Merv Hughes, Jamie Cox or David Boon will step down as a national selector.

It will be Chappell's second stint as a selector.

CA general manager Michael Brown said the appointment also meant there was now a full-time communication outlet for players, coaches and the media.

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Aamer feels no pressure

Cricket

AFP, London

Pakistan's teenage fast bowling sensation Mohammad Aamer has insisted he remains unaffected by the "pressure" of playing international cricket.

The 18-year-old left-arm quick was named man-of-the-match in Pakistan's four-wicket third Test win at The Oval for his impressive career-best five wickets for 52 runs in England's second innings.

He has now taken 13 wickets at an average of just over 20 apiece in three Tests against England.

And it's not just his bowling that shows maturity beyond his years. Aamer's resourceful tail-end batting has been a feature of the current campaign and his patient unbeaten four helped Pakistan to their victory target at The Oval in a win that reduced England's series lead to 2-1 ahead of the fourth and final Test starting at Lord's on Thursday.

"I don't really let pressure affect me at all,"

Aamer told a Pakistani website.

"I believe that pressure is something that an individual creates for himself and it's something that you can avoid. I guess it's just down to the individual and the characteristics of an individual."

He added: "I just go out there, relax, smile, enjoy myself, play my natural game, do what comes naturally to me and play my cricket according to the conditions and match situation. The more you worry about things when you are out there in the middle, the more problems you are going to encounter."

Aamer and Mohammad Asif are rapidly developing into one of the best new-ball pairings in world cricket and Aamer said: "He's a fantastic guy to bowl in tandem with."

"He's such a threatening bowler, someone who has the ability to take a wicket with every delivery. "He never gives the opposition batsmen any respite. His nagging accuracy and skill really helps me and I think we complement each other very well."

Aamer also paid tribute to the influence of

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SPORTS POLL
TODAY'S QUESTION
 Which European league do you enjoy the most?
 Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote
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What to WATCH

TEN Sports
 Champions League play-off
 Sampdoria v Werder Bremen
 Live from 12:40am (Wednesday)

ZEE Sports
 Champions League play-off
 Sevilla v Braga
 Live from 12:40am (Wednesday)

Federer's 63rd title

Tennis

AFP, Cincinnati

World number two Roger Federer won his second ATP Cincinnati Masters crown in a row on Sunday, outlasting American Mardy Fish 6-7, 7-6, 6-4 for his 63rd career title.

The Swiss superstar, who is bidding for a 17th Grand Slam crown when the US Open begins on August 30, matched Bjorn Borg for fifth on the all-time Open Era title list and captured his fourth Cincinnati crown after 2005, 2007 and 2009.

"I have been playing well the last couple of weeks and today was just another proof that I'm playing really well," Federer said.

Federer captured his first title since the Australian Open and served notice he will be difficult to defeat at the US Open, where he lost last year's final to Juan Martin del Potro, who will not defend his title because of an injury.

"It's nice knowing the hard work in the off-season after Wimbledon pays off right away," Federer said. "I've been committed to this sport for many years and when you do that and give yourself over and over again, you will break through by winning tournaments again."

"I was maybe playing a little bit too passive. Now I'm taking it to the opponents again. I'm hoping that that's the right game plan right now."

Federer used a steady serve and consistent back-line work to allow only one break chance for Fish.

"I was really consistent on my serve," Federer said. "I had the upper hand from the baseline. He had to start taking chances."

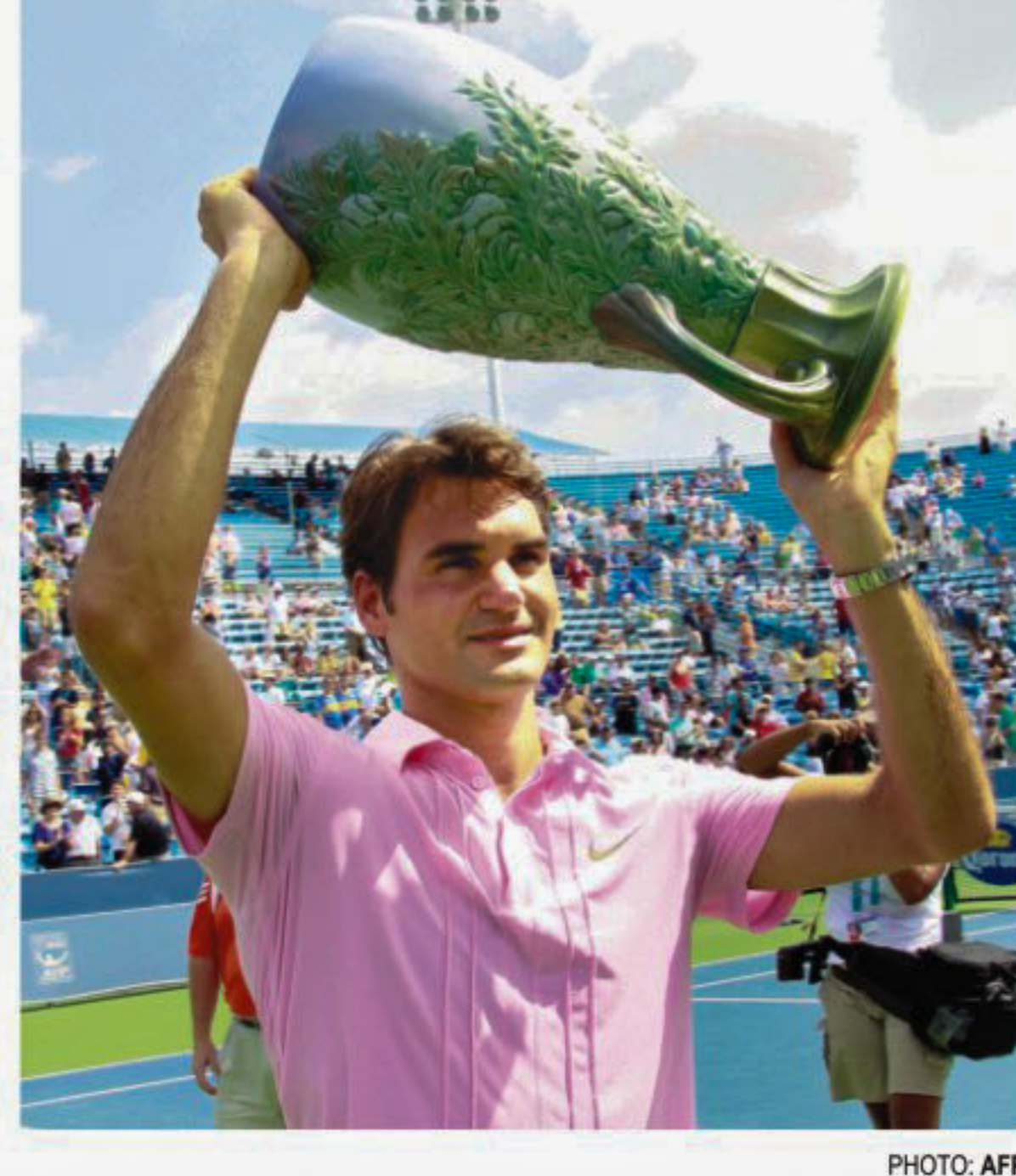
"This is how tennis used to be played coming up -- big serves, some volleys. It was played on a couple points here and there. I hung tough and made him work hard and was able to come across the finish line faster."

Wildcard entrant Fish, who had won recent titles in Newport and Atlanta, fired 17 aces but failed in his bid to become the first unseeded champion in the event, the final major tuneup for the year's last Grand Slam tournament.

"I played well. He played well. It was a pretty high level for the most part," Fish said. "In two matches he has broken me only one time in five sets, so I have played really well against him the past couple of times."

Federer's victory kept Fish, 28, from reaching a career-high 16th in the rankings but the American will still rise considerably from 36th where he began the week.

"I feel great. I've done some things I've never done before," Fish said. "It was a great tournament. It's as well as I've played."



World number two Swiss superstar Roger Federer holds aloft the winner's trophy after beating American Mardy Fish in the Cincinnati Masters final on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

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